

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are in the application.

Claims 1-20 have been made subject of a restriction requirement.

By way of this amendment, claims 1, 2, 6 and 12-17 have been canceled, claims 3-5, 9, 11 and 18-20 have been amended and new claims 21-34 have been added.

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 3-5, 7-11 and 18-34 will be pending.

In the Official Action, a requirement was made to restrict the invention to one of 61 Groups described in the Detailed Action section of the Official Action.

Applicants provisionally elect Group 21 – SEQ ID NO:27 with traverse. Applicants present herewith amended and new generic claims that define a novel special technical feature that covers SEQ ID NO: 27.

Claims 3 and 18 have been amended to refer to nucleic acid molecules and plasmids, respectively, that comprise a nucleotide sequence that encodes an attenuated HIV Vif, each nucleic acid molecule and plasmid having a nucleotide sequence that encodes an Arginine in place of the Proline at the position corresponding to position 162 of the Vif consensus sequence set forth in the application – SEQ ID NO:1. Claim 3 covers nucleic acid molecules comprising SEQ ID NO:27 and claim 18 covers plasmids comprising SEQ ID NO:27.

Claims 4, 9, 11 and 19 have been amended to refer to nucleic acid molecules, recombinant vectors, host cells and plasmids, respectively, that comprise a nucleotide sequence that encodes an attenuated HIV Vif comprising SEQ ID NO:4. The nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:27 encodes SEQ ID NO:4. Claim 4 covers nucleic acid molecules comprising SEQ ID NO:27, claim 9 covers recombinant vectors comprising SEQ ID NO:27, claim 11 covers host cells comprising SEQ ID NO:27 and claim 19 covers plasmids comprising SEQ ID NO:27.

Claims 5 and 20 have been amended to refer to nucleic acid molecules and plasmids, respectively, that comprise SEQ ID NO:27. New claims 26 and 30 refer to recombinant vectors and host cells, respectively, that comprise SEQ ID NO:27. Claim 5 covers nucleic acid molecules comprising SEQ ID NO:27, claim 26 covers recombinant vectors comprising SEQ ID NO:27, claim 30 covers host cells comprising SEQ ID NO:27 and claim 20 covers plasmids comprising SEQ ID NO:27.

New claims 21, 24, 28 and 32 refer to nucleic acid molecules, recombinant vectors, host cells and plasmids, respectively, that comprise a nucleotide sequence that encodes an attenuated HIV Vif comprising specific amino acid substitutions and insertions relative to the sequence of the consensus sequence. The nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:27 encodes SEQ ID NO:4 which contains each of the specific amino acid substitutions and insertions set forth in claims 21, 24, 28 and 32. Claim 21 covers nucleic acid molecules comprising SEQ ID NO:27, claim 24 covers recombinant vectors comprising SEQ ID NO:27, claim 28 covers host cells comprising SEQ ID NO:27 and claim 32 covers plasmids comprising SEQ ID NO:27.

New claims 22, 25, 29 and 33 refer to nucleic acid molecules, recombinant vectors, host cells and plasmids, respectively, that comprise a nucleotide sequence that encodes an attenuated HIV Vif comprising SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:9 or SEQ ID NO:11. The nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:27 encodes SEQ ID NO:4. New claim 22 covers nucleic acid molecules comprising SEQ ID NO:27, new claim 25 covers recombinant vectors comprising SEQ ID NO:27, new claim 29 covers host cells comprising SEQ ID NO:27 and new claim 33 covers plasmids comprising SEQ ID NO:27.

New claims 23, 27, 31 and 34 refer to nucleic acid molecules, recombinant vectors, host cells and plasmids, respectively, that comprise SEQ ID NO:27, SEQ ID NO:32 or SEQ ID NO:33. New claim 23 covers nucleic acid molecules comprising SEQ ID NO:27, new claim 27 covers recombinant vectors comprising SEQ ID NO:27, new claim 31 covers host cells comprising SEQ ID NO:27 and new claim 34 covers plasmids comprising SEQ ID NO:27.

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Claims 3-6, 7-11 and 18-34 are in condition for allowance. A notice allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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